

Complaints for Children and Young People

Policy

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1.0	23/06/2020	Implementation and Assurance	This policy explains what actions children and young people can expect from Territory Families after a complaint has been made.
1.1	17/11/2021	Operational Policy	Rebrand and update of contact information.

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1. Policy

Everyone has the right to be treated fairly, feel safe and be respected. If you think there is a problem and feel like you are not being heard, you have the right to make a **complaint**.

A **complaint**, is when you think a decision is unfair and you want to tell someone about it.

Any client or member of the public has the right to make a complaint with the Department. The Department want to handle complaints fairly, quickly and thoroughly.

This policy explains what actions children and young people can expect from the Department after a complaint has been made. We want to:

- make sure the person making the complaint has trust in the Department; and
- improve services offered to children and young people.

2. How to make a complaint

You may get help from a friend, family member or someone you trust when making a complaint to the Department. They can be with you when you make your complaint.

Ways to make complaints are:

- Speak with a **staff member** or **case worker**.
- **Online** at <https://tfhc.nt.gov.au/contacts/compliments-and-complaints> and click on 'make a complaint'.
- **In writing**
Complaints Resolution
Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities
PO Box 37037
WINNELLIE NT 0820
- **Telephone or email**
Complaints Resolution can be contacted by telephone on 1800 750 167 (free call) or by email TFHC.complaints@nt.gov.au
- **Contacting your local office**
The Department has offices throughout the Northern Territory.

3. What you can expect from the Department

The Department wants to hear your complaints. Your complaint will be dealt with as quickly as possible. A person making a complaint will be:

- offered different ways to make a complaint;
- listened to and treated with respect;
- told about the complaint process;

- taken seriously; and
- told what is being done with their complaint.

3.1. Objectivity and fairness

The Department will treat all complaints fairly. The person investigating the complaint will be different from the person you are complaining about.

3.2. Confidentiality

Making a complaint with the Department is free and **confidential**, which means we will keep your details private.

If the Department thinks you or someone else is unsafe, staff may need to share the information with another organisation to help keep everyone safe.

4. What can you make a complaint about?

A complaint to the Department can be about:

- ✓ staff;
- ✓ a service;
- ✓ the way you are treated; or
- ✓ anything that makes you feel unsafe.

Sometimes the Department may not accept a complaint, reasons for this could be:

- × the complaint is already being investigated by someone else like the Police or the Children's Commissioner;
- × the complaint is about a decision made by a Court; or
- × the complaint does not relate to the Department but another agency.

If you think the outcome of your complaint is unfair, the Department can help you contact other organisations such as the Office of the Children's Commissioner, who may be able to talk to you about other options.

4.1. Communication Assistance

If English is not your first language, or you have a significant hearing loss, or other difficulties that make it hard for you to communicate, the Department can organise support for you. For example, the Department can organise an **Interpreter** for you. An **Interpreter** translates one language into another.

Interpreter contacts:

Aboriginal Interpreter Service - 1800 334 944

Interpreter Services (all other languages) - (08) 8999 8506

4.1.1. Department, Care and Protection Office telephone numbers

Arnhem	8987 0400
Barkly	8962 4334
Central Australia	8955 6001
Katherine	8973 8600
Palmerston	89 22 7111
Parap	8999 4789
Top End	8922 8474